



State of Connecticut
Department of Developmental Services

DDS

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**DEPARTMENT OF DEVELOPMENTAL SERVICES TESTIMONY
BEFORE THE PUBLIC HEALTH COMMITTEE**

February 27, 2013

Senator Gerratana, Representative Johnson, and members of the Public Health Committee. I am Terrence W. Macy, Ph.D., Commissioner of the Department of Developmental Services (DDS). Thank you for the opportunity to testify on **Proposed S.B. No. 297 - AN ACT ESTABLISHING A UNIFORM STATE LICENSING PROCESS FOR PRIVATE COMMUNITY-BASED PROVIDERS**. This bill would amend statutes to require the Department of Public Health, in consultation with other state agencies, to create a one-stop licensing process that permits private community-based providers and nonprofits to obtain licensure from numerous health-related agencies, including the Departments of Mental Health and Addiction Services, Children and Families, and Social Services through completion of a single application in order to ease the licensure burden currently faced by private providers who are required to file duplicative applications for multiple state agencies. The bill also would achieve efficiencies and cost reductions in administrative expenses for both the state and the private providers. Although DDS is not specifically named in the bill, I would like to offer the following comments on this issue which were shared with the Public Health Committee during the 2011 session.

DDS currently licenses private provider agencies to operate numerous residential facilities across our state including 800 community living arrangements or "group homes". The licensure process is a component of our oversight of providers to ensure an acceptable level of quality in all settings operated or contracted by DDS. Even if the licensure process was removed from DDS, our department would still need to be involved as both the funder and the department responsible for the individuals receiving services. DDS licensing regulations help ensure compliance with specific state and federal regulations, the requirements of the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) regarding Connecticut's Home and Community Based Services (HCBS) Comprehensive and Individual and Family Support Waivers, and the department's policies and procedures.

DDS licensing requirements are set by the requirements of the federal HCBS waiver, state regulation, and department policy. Each state agency operates under differing requirements and mandates, and differing legal relationships with their respective consumers. This would need to be considered if the plan to design and operate one licensing entity with universal standards and requirements were to move forward.

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DDS is committed to quality services and supports for the individuals that we serve. While DDS can appreciate the effort to streamline processes, the agency respectfully requests that the implications of any change to the licensure process related to the state's human services system be carefully evaluated.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on SB 297. Please contact Christine Pollio Cooney, Director of Legislative and Executive Affairs at (860) 418-6066 with any questions.